LEWIS

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER - Thursday, September 25,

Fulton Lewis Jr.

Check on Broadcasts

MUNICH, Sept. 24. HAVE spent many hours during this news-gathering sojourn in Europe studying the activities of Radio Free Europe and its several affiliated Free Europe operations,

Only a comparatively minor portion of this time was devoted to on the spot in spection of the physical facilities of the organization, headquartered here. - -

fund raising pitchmen make big ballyhoo about the equipment, the transmitters, the studios and the news-gathering machinery. They nave organized tours for visitors, with a briefing room and standardized spiel, all of which means exactly nothing.

So far as I am aware, no one has ever argued that RFE's equipment is

inferior or inadequate. FULTON LEWIS JR. With the money they have had available, it could well be built of 24-karat

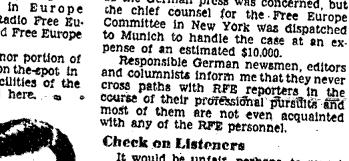
The pertinent question is what goes out from the antennae, in the name of "truth," to the people behind the Iron Curtain, and whether it is heard by those people, and what effect it has; also how its host, the Bavarian government, appraises it, and what its colleagues among the German press think of it and how it, is regarded by Muffich.

After all, a \$10,000,000 radio plant can go down the drain to bankruptcy in six months, or a 250-watt coffee pot operation can reap a bonanza in the same period, according to what the station puts on the air.

Adverse Criticism

And the answer to all these questions, in the case of Radio Free Europe, is bad. In exploring the periphery of the RFE picture generally, I find a long nistory of highly adverse criticism in the Bavarian Farliament, to the extent that RFE is excluded from all participation in the screening of escapees and refugees in this, its residential German state.

Topside RFE personnel have been involved in a major black-market scandal which resulted in the firing or recall to the States of at least eight individuals.



It would be unfair, perhaps, to report that German rank and file citizens to whom I talked said they have never listened to the RFE programs, because they have their own German language broadcast band stations, as we have, and RFE broadcasts mostly on short-wave, in non-German languages.

Efforts were made to hush this up, so far

as the German press was concerned, but

But among the many refugees and escapees whom I interviewed in camps -people from Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, to which countries and in which languages the RFE broadcasts are specifically beamed -I have yet to find the first regular listener.

A few said they had heard of Radio Free Europe. Most of them got it confused with the Voice of America and the Armed Services network which commands a very extensive European listening audience, although it is a shoestring operation intended for American personnel stationed in Europe and their families.

By way of assembling more specific and detailed information to these ends, I have assigned three individual and unknown to each other reporters here to conduct polls of refugee and escapee camps, to determine just what percentage of the Iron Curtain people have been RFE lis-

It will be some weeks before the results of these polls are available, but when they are, they should provide a triply-checked measure of RFE's true effectiveness.

They spout ebullient claims of 70,000, 000, that being the aggregate population of the countries to which they broadcast. I suspect that these polls will show other-

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